Calif. Legion Links Fish to Seditionists

(Special to the Daily Worker)

LOS ANGELES, April 16.—A special fact-finding committee of the California American Legion upheld state and national Legion resolutions censuring Congressman Hamilton Fish of New York for permitting use of his Congressional frank by people under indictment as seditionists in a report made public today.

The report is a heavily-documented, 16 page brochure reviewing Fish's record on foreign policy from 1938 to Pearl Harbor and the excessive use of his frank by Leon De Aryan, Elizabeth Dilling, George Sylvester Viereck and others convicted or indicted for plotting against the war effort.

(Fish is being opposed for renomination in the Republican primaries in his new 29th congressional district).

The California Department American Legion adopted a resolution condemning Fish in 1943 at its 1943 convention. This was followed by a similar resolution by the National Convention last September.

The investigation conducted by the fact-finding commission was inspired by Fish's attack in Congress on the Legion for its resolution. Fish charged that it was part of a "smear" campaign against him and, in turn, tried to "smear" the California legionnaires who were responsible for calling attention to his activities.

BLAST FISH TIEUPS

After showing chronologically how Fish by his utterances and his votes in Congress aided the Nazis and the Japanese, the report reveals that as late as December 21, 1943, De Aryan, publisher of a San Diego weekly, "The Broom," which contained many articles following the Nazi propaganda line, used Fish's franked envelopes to mail to the weekly's mailing list the remarks of Congressman Fish advocating amendment to the Sedition Law.

At that time de Aryan was already under Government indictment, but released on bail, and charged, as de Aryan himself put it "with conspiracy with the Nazi government to demoralize the armed forces in this city" (San Diego). Passage of Fish's amendment would

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have prevented the government from prosecuting de Aryan.

Fish did not deny permitting de Aryan to use his frank.

Earlier, the same remarks of Hamilton Fish were mailed from Chicago under Fish's frank by Elizabeth Dilling, then under indictment and released under bail, the report disclosses.

Marshalling evidence to show that "Hamilton Fish was guilty of impropriety and infringed the spirit of the franking privilege," the American Legion report declares that in addition to de Aryan and Dilling, Fish permitted such persons as George Sylvester Viereck (now convicted), Rev. Gerald Winrod (now indicted), Prescott Dennett (now indicted), the Islands for War Debts Committee, and many other persons and organizations to use franked envelopes.

The staggering quantity of such franked mail is indicated by the report which declares that from January 11, 1940, until September 4, 1941, Fish obtained from the U. S. Printing Office 856,000 articles in Fish's franked envelopes. Complying with the orders of others, Fish's secretary, George Hill, obtained an additional 852,000 articles in the franked envelopes of other Congressmen. Thus Fish and his secretary during that period obtained 1,708,500 franked envelopes, the Legion report states.